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Fish and Wildlife Service

Fishery Leaflet 148

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PACIFIC OCEANIC FISHERY
INVESTIGATIONS

Chicago, Ill. * February 1946

IMPROVED FISH TRAP FOR TAKING SPAWNERS

Prepared in the Division of Game-fish and Hatcheries

Salmon and trout migrate upstream to spawning areas and enroute may be captured, under certain conditions, by means of fish traps. In order to utilize a trap the water must not be too shallow and the stream and its banks should lend themselves to the installation of racks or other barriers, which will divert the fish toward the trap. The successful operation of a trap is very largely dependent upon a good location.

The trap will vary in size depending upon the stream and the anticipated run of fish. Usually the trap consist of a wooden floor with four slat walls and a cover. The entrance is on the downstream side and is placed on the floor level to encourage the entry of fish. A "V" type entry-way projects from the entrance a short distance into the trap proper. The apex of the "V" is only slightly wider than the anticipated size of the fish to be captured. In practice the fish follow the rack or other barrier in the stream, to the entrance of the trap and pass through the "V" entry-way into the trap proper.

Unfortunately, unless an attendant remains at the trap and removes the fish periodically, they discover the "V" apex opening and escape out into the stream again. To prevent this escapement an improvement was recently developed by Mr. H. C. Topel which is very successful. An auxiliary holding pen is added upstream to the trap box. Connecting the two is an entrance cut into the wall about 16 inches from the floor with another "V" heading into the auxiliary pen. The opening is smaller than that in the primary trap. It measures about five inches square in the traps used at Yellowstone Park Station, but the size would depend upon the size of fish being trapped. After passing into the primary trap, the fish find the opening into the auxiliary pen and due to its smaller size and the fact it is raised above the floor, few fish are able to escape.

The improved trap which is illustrated, has proven to be more than twice as efficient as former types used in the Service since it was not necessary to remove the fish at frequent intervals to prevent escapement. By preventing the loss of fish the length of time the traps have to be fished, may also be reduced thus effecting further economy.

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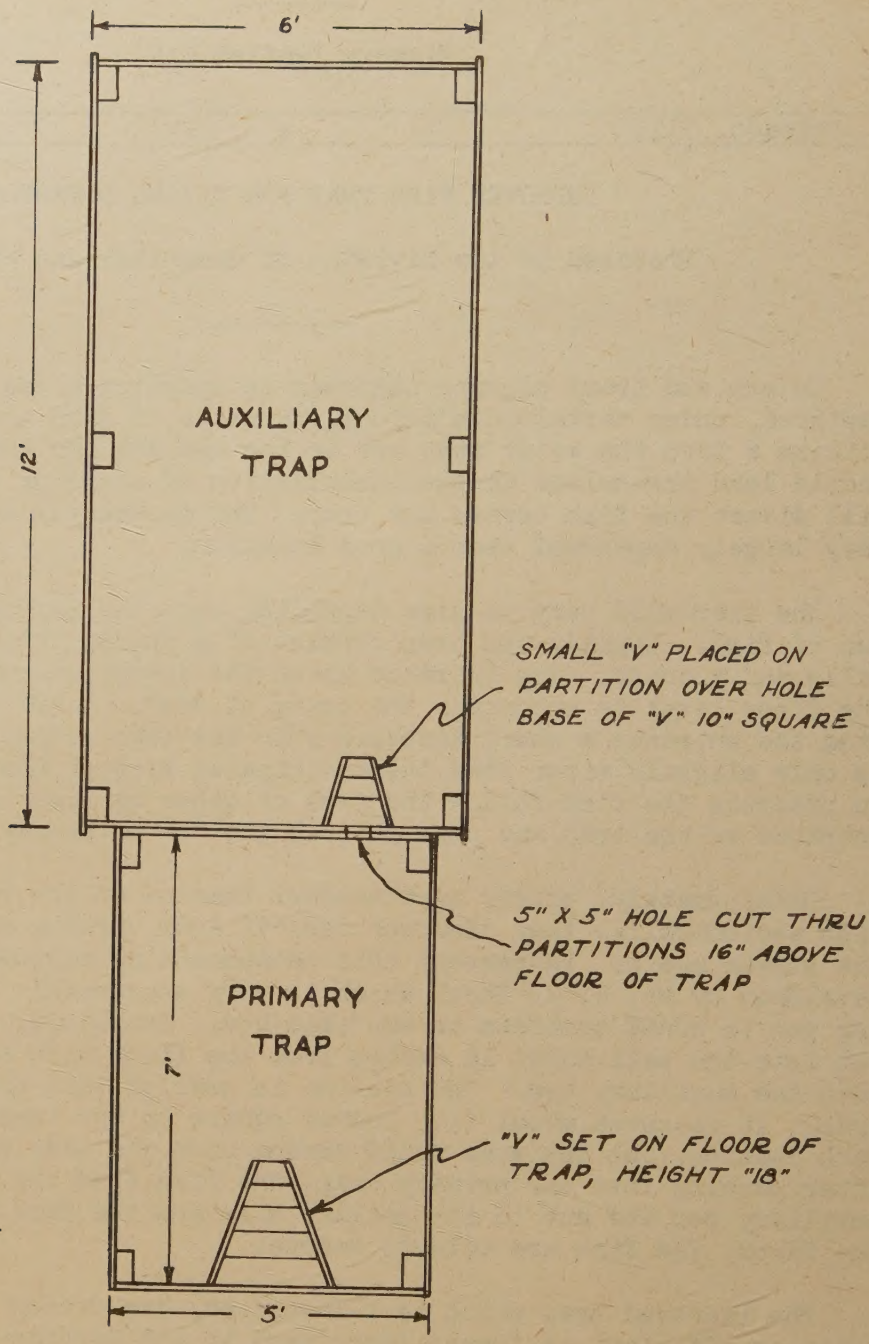
6'
12'
AUXILIARY
TRAP
SMALL "V" PLACED ON
PARTITION OVER HOLE
BASE OF "V" 10" SQUARE
5" X 5" HOLE CUT THRU
PARTITIONS 16" ABOVE
FLOOR OF TRAP
PRIMARY
TRAP
7'
"V" SET ON FLOOR OF
TRAP, HEIGHT "18"
5'

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